IX. *Part of a Letter from Mr.* B. Sherman *to Dr.* Hans Sloane, *R. S. Sec. concerning the Bones of a dead* Fœtus, *taken out of the* Uterus *of a Cow; and of a* Callus *that ſupplied the Loſs of Part of the* Os Femoris.

SIR,

YOU will receive with this a Curioſity which I thought might not be unacceptable to you; 'tis the Bones of a Calf that periſhed in the *Uterus* of its Dam after the following manner, as I had the Account from the Perſon who ſold the Cow to the Butcher.

The Cow was very unthrifty, for which they gave her Cow Phyſick, and ſuch Drinks as they apprehended proper for her; notwithſtanding which ſhe grew worſe, and continued a great while in a lean, pining, waſting Condition, and was reduc'd to ſo weak a State, that they concluded ſhe would dye; when on a ſudden ſhe began to eat her Meat, and did thrive ſo very faſt, that in Six or Eight Months ſhe was ſo fat as to be Sold to the Butcher; who, when he kill'd her, found theſe Bones in her *Uterus*, juſt as you will ſee them in the Box, full as dry

dry, there being no manner of Moiſture in the Bag (as he call'd it) in which the Bones were contain'd. The ſame Digeſtive Humour, which diſſolv'd the Skin and Muſcular Parts of the Calf, might (I preſume) reaſonably enough be ſuppos'd to diſſolve the Cartilages, and (for ought I know) even part of the Bones in a *Fœtus*. I am pretty ſure what I ſend you is all the Butcher found, and I believe you will find them compleat; but of what Age the *Fœtus* was, or whether, if the Cow had not been kill'd, there would have been a total Diſſolution, I muſt leave to your more curious Judgment to determine.

I am inform'd by ſome Phyſitians to whom I have ſhewn theſe Bones, that there are many ſuch Inſtances in Anatomical Writers; and particularly one of a Woman, whoſe *Fœtus* diſſolv'd ſo perfectly, that ſome of the Bones digeſted through her *Abdomen*, and (which I think is more ſtrange) that the ſame Woman had Children afterwards.

Whether theſe Bones would in time have made their way through the *Abdomen* of the Cow, I am not able to judge; all I can aſſure you is, That theſe Bones were found as is above expreſs'd, and that the Fact may be proved by Witneſſes of undoubted Credit.

POSTSCRIPT.

I Could not omit to ſubjoyn an Obſervation in my own Practice, which alſo may not be unworthy your Obſervation; 'Tis of a Compound Fracture, which happen'd on the Thigh of a Young Man about Seventeen:

venteen: I was oblig'd to take out the whole Subſtance of *Os femoris* about Two Inches; and yet, by keeping a due Extenſion, Nature did in four Months ſupply ſuch a *Callus*, that the Part is not a quarter of an Inch ſhorter than the other ſide; and the Perſon is as ſtrong as ever, and walks without any Lameneſs.

Keldon *near* Witham *in* Eſſex,
September 4. 1708.

Yours, &c.

B. Sherman.

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